# Message Overview

*Brief description of how messages are constructed and how
message formats are presented in this document.*

CBP Air AMS syntax is based upon a syntax known as the International Air Transport Association Cargo Interchange Messaging Procedures (IATA CARGO-IMP).

Air AMS thus utilizes a character string equivalent to a carriage-return and line feed to represent termination of a message line and the forward slant '/' as a field delimiter within the message line. This format is used rather than a fixed record format to be compatible with the IATA CARGO-IMP requirements. Strict requirements for input fields include edits for the positioning, validation and logic of all the fields. Air AMS will continue to mature with the needs of the Trade as well as the needs of CBP.

Air AMS utilizes different message types for different business needs. Air AMS messages are comprised of individual message lines some, but not all of which, begin with a Line Identifier. Message lines must adhere to the prescribed sequence based upon the message type including all mandatory message lines related to the message type.

Message line status of "O" (Optional) indicates the manifest data is not required for validation of the message type, but may be required for CBP to release Freight Status Notification (FSN) messages. FSNs reference such things as entry processing and/or transfer authorization. *Note*: Some message lines contain multiple data elements, some of which are conditional, optional or mandatory. Most manifest data elements within a message line are separated by the forward slant '/', therefore all prospective Air AMS trade users should ensure that user-entered free-format alphanumeric data does NOT contain a user-entered slant character.

For a complete list, refer to the Message Types chapter of this document.

# Message/Line Table Layout

1.  Table Headers - Contain a description of the message/line data that the table is defining.

2.  Column Headers - Describe the type of data contained in the associated column.

    A.  Element/Data Element - Identifies the elements/data elements of each line.

    B.  Element Description – Message types table only

    C.  Length/Class – Describes the format of each data element.  Line table only

    D.  Status – Contains a code with the following meaning:

        ▪ 'M' – Element is mandatory, needed for successful processing of the message type.

        ▪ 'C' – Element is conditional, not needed for successful processing of the message type. The element may be required based on the factors associated with the function.

        ▪ 'O' – Element is optional, not needed for successful processing of the message type.  The element may be necessary to complete the manifest record for release of the freight status notification message(s).

    E.  "Notes" – Contains a number that refers to text under 'Notes' describing information pertinent to the element.